
Hearing Aids

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This section contains information about hearing aids and program coverage (*California Code of Regulations* [CCR], Title 22, Section 51319). For additional information about billing, refer to the *Hearing Aids: Billing* and *Hearing Aids: Billing Example* sections of this manual.

Program Coverage

Medi-Cal covers hearing aids when supplied by a hearing aid dispenser on the prescription of an otolaryngologist, or the attending physician (in consultation with the evaluating otolaryngologist, if possible) when no otolaryngologist is available in the community. An audiological evaluation, including a hearing aid evaluation performed by, or under the supervision of, the above prescribing physician, or by a licensed audiologist, is required.

Medi-Cal limits the total cost of hearing aid benefit services, including sales tax, to \$1,510 per recipient per fiscal year (*Welfare and Institutions Code* [W&I Code], Section 14131.05). The following are excluded from the cap:

- Pregnancy-related benefits and benefits for the treatment of other conditions that might complicate the pregnancy.
- «Recipients under the Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit.»
- Recipients who are receiving long-term care in a licensed skilled nursing facility or intermediate care facility (NF-A and NF-B). Recipients who are receiving long-term care in a licensed intermediate care facility for the developmentally disabled (ICF/DD), including ICF/DD Habilitative and ICF/DD Nursing.
- Recipients in the Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE).
- Recipients receiving contracted managed care with Senior Care Action Network (SCAN) and AIDS Healthcare Foundation.

Replacement of hearing aids that are lost, stolen or irreparably damaged due to circumstance beyond the recipient's control is not included in the \$1,510 maximum benefit cap.

Coverage for Children

California Children's Services (CCS)

Medi-Cal recipients younger than 21 years of age must be referred to CCS for hearing services. Additional information about CCS eligibility, benefits, and claim authorization is available at the [California Children's Services](#) webpage.

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) Benefit

Medi-Cal covers all medically necessary services for Medi-Cal recipients younger than 21 years of age, including for children not enrolled in CCS. Providers may refer to the [Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment Services](#) webpage for additional information about coverage.

Hearing Aid Coverage for Children Program (HACCP)

«Children younger than 21 years of age who are not eligible for Medi-Cal may qualify for state-only coverage of hearing aids and related services through HACCP.» Providers may refer to the [Hearing Aid Coverage for Children Program](#) webpage for additional information about HACCP eligibility, benefits and claim authorization.

Eligibility Requirements

For a provider to receive reimbursement, the recipient must be eligible for Medi-Cal or CCS or enrolled in HACCP on the date of service.

Authorization

Authorization is required for the purchase or trial period rental of hearing aids and for repairs that cost more than \$25 per repair service. Claims for individual repair services are not cumulative when determining the need for authorization.

«*Treatment Authorization Requests* (TARs) for hearing aids for Medi-Cal-only and HACCP recipients must be submitted to the TAR Processing Center.»

Note: Refer to “Programmable or Digital Hearing Aid Systems” in this section for authorization information on programmable or digital hearing aid systems.

Refer to “Hearing Aid Supplies and Accessories for Specific Needs” in this section for authorization information on hearing aid supplies and accessories necessary to meet the specific needs of individual recipients.

Ear Molds Exempt

«Authorization is not required for the purchase of up to two ear molds (one pair if binaural) dispensed on the same date of service, up to a maximum of four ear molds (two pairs if binaural) per 12 months, without a TAR. Additional ear molds may be available with an approved TAR for medical necessity.»

TAR Documentation

The following documentation is required with any TAR for hearing aids:

- «New hearing aids including surface-worn bone conduction hearing device (BCHDs)»
 - Appropriately signed prescription from an otolaryngologist or the attending physician (in consultation with the evaluating otolaryngologist, if possible), when no otolaryngologist is available in the community
 - Appropriately signed medical history and physical examination by an otolaryngologist
 - Appropriately signed audiologic report and hearing aid evaluation, regardless of the recipient's ability to speak English
 - Specification of ear to be fitted
- Replacement of lost, stolen or irreparably damaged hearing aids:
 - Detailed description of hearing aid loss or events leading to damage, signed by the recipient and physician
 - Completed audiometric report dated within the last 12 months unless TAR is for the replacement of a recently purchased hearing aid within the last three months
 - Replacement of a stolen hearing aid requires a copy of a police report

Note: «A request for replacement of a hearing aid that may still be repairable must include statement from the manufacturer that the hearing aid is not repairable. If a hearing aid is clearly not repairable, the provider does not need to first send in the hearing aid for the manufacturer to attempt repair; however, the provider should clearly document their reasoning to support a conclusion that repair attempts are not possible.»

- Replacement of old hearing aids that no longer meet the needs of the recipient:
 - Comparative audiometric reports used for fitting old aid and new aid
 - Documentation that the old aid is performing to specifications but is no longer adequate
 - Documentation that hearing improved with the new aid
- Hearing aid repairs:
 - Description of the problem requiring repair
 - Specification of ear to be fitted
 - Hearing aid manufacturer's name, unit, model designation, date of purchase and serial number

Legend

Symbols used in the document above are explained in the following table.

Symbol	Description
«	This is a change mark symbol. It is used to indicate where on the page the most recent change begins.
»	This is a change mark symbol. It is used to indicate where on the page the most recent change ends.